



NEWSLETTER



Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the
South Jersey Shore

Volume 20, Issue 1

January 2018

January Services

We meet at our UU Center, Pomona Rd and Liebig Street, Galloway NJ (near the north entrance to Richard Stockton College).
Services are at 10:00 am unless otherwise noted.

January 7	The Art of Meaning <i>Guest minister Rev. Kimberley Debus</i> Art has power to move us and change our lives. But what is it about the arts? We'll examine the ways viewing, performing, and making art helps us make sense of our lives, our communities, and all of creation.
January 14	What Makes a Covenant? <i>Rev. Dawn Fortune</i> Unitarian Universalists are freely gathered people who voluntarily enter into covenanted community. As we welcome new members to our congregation, let's consider what it means to be a covenanted community. A covenant lays out some standards about how we will treat one another, but what makes it different from a contract? Join us to welcome our new members and renew our connection to each other.
January 21	In the Deep Midwinter <i>Rev. Dawn Fortune</i> It's been a year since the last presidential inauguration. Let's take time to consider what has changed in our lives since that day, and examine what it is that draws us together each Sunday. We will explore the ancient language and ritual of worship, and consider how it serves our present spiritual development.
January 28	Compassion for Conservatives <i>Lay speaker Kit Marlowe</i> Many people describe the current political environment as "tribal." We tend to ascribe most of the irrationality to whoever we disagree with. Think about how you stop listening whenever you suspect racism or sexism. Kit Marlowe will help us try to learn how to recognize "the inherent worth and dignity" of those who support President Trump and engage in "a free and responsible search for truth and meaning" with them. It may not be easy.

**STOCKTON UNIVERSITY'S 14TH ANNUAL
DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY OF SERVICE**

MONDAY, JANUARY 15, 2018
<http://www.stockton.edu/MLKday>

About our guest speaker....



Rev. Kimberley Debus works as a community minister in the Capital Region of New York State, inspiring congregations to more artful and art-filled worship, congregational life, and public witness. In addition to her community ministry, she is an adjunct consultant with the Central East Region. She has previously served the First Universalist Church of Southold on Long Island and One Island Family UU Congregation in Key West.

Margaret Circle... join us at 1 pm on Thursday, January 4 in the UU Center library. Betsy Searight will lead a discussion on a topic that has become hot in recent months – sexual harassment in the workplace. Your #MeToo stories will be welcomed. Betsy writes, "what does this awareness mean for men, and will there be an overreaction?" Let us share in conversation and comfort in this safe space. Light refreshments will be served.

BOOK CLUB in January will be starting at 6:30 pm on Friday, January 19 and meeting in the UU Center library. We will be discussing *BASTARD OUT OF CAROLINA* by Dorothy Allison. The novel's profound portrait of family dynamics in the rural South won the author a National Book Award nomination and launched her into the literary spotlight. Critics have likened Allison to Faulkner, Flannery O'Connor, and Harper Lee, naming her the first writer of her generation to dramatize the lives and language of poor whites in the South.

NOTE: December gift exchange, snacks and brief discussion of *HOLIDAYS ON ICE* will also happen (due to cancellation of December meeting because of snow). It will be a busy evening!!!!

UUCSJS OUT IN THE WORLD

Richard Grzywinski will be delivering his sermon "Wisdom and Where to Find It" (which he did for UUCSJS in January 2017) at the UU Fellowship Of Newark (Delaware) on January 28, 2018.

Wisdom of Martin Luther King Jr

Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.

Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that.
Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.

We must accept finite disappointment,
but never lose infinite hope.

Faith is taking the first step even when you don't see
the whole staircase.

In the End, we will remember not the words of our enemies,
but the silence of our friends.



WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH FAMILY PROMISE?

Family Promise of Atlantic County is looking for people to **serve on their committees**. These include Finance Committee, Fundraising Committee, Host Congregation Committee, and more. Contact FPAC Board member and UUCSJS member Shelee McIlvaine or Debbi Dagavarian if you are interested.

Family Promise is also in need of a talented **auto mechanic** to do some diagnostics for their white van. The van has stalled without warning a couple of times recently. We would like to find out what the problem is so we can get it fixed. Additionally, the van needs to have the tail pipe strapped up to the chassis. Please speak to Debbi Dagavarian if you are able to help.

Circle Dinners Begin in January

What is a Circle Dinner? A great chance to get to know your fellow UUCSJSers better! We set aside Saturday dates in the winter months where someone hosts and each participating pair (singles are welcome and appreciated!) brings one part of the meal. Please join in the fun!

The first Circle Dinner of 2018 is scheduled for Saturday, January 27. Sign-ups will continue until January 14. Sign-up sheets along with a complete description will be available at the back table in the Sanctuary. You may also sign up by emailing Marie Taylor; be sure to include your name, email, address and phone number. Please also indicate whether you can host.

Schedules will be distributed as soon as possible but by the 21st at the latest. Sign-ups for the February 24 Circle Dinner will continue until February 4.

Rev. Dawn Fortune

Gentle People,

I hope this finds you well and rested as the holiday season winds down. I am on vacation and study leave for the first two weeks of January, and will return to the pulpit on January 14. It is about study leave and my schedule that I want to talk about this month.

Study leave is a part of every minister's standard contract. It is designed as time away from congregational duties to allow a minister to do research, writing, and many of the project sorts of things that we don't have time to do in the course of a normal church week. The standard allowance of study leave in an annual contract is four weeks. Study leave is to be used apart from conferences and workshops, because those are considered active working days, unavailable for the study and work I described above.

I put off using any of my study leave until after the mid-winter holidays in order to front-load some of my time here, so that I could maximize my time to learn people's names and stories. I'm glad I did it, and I believe it was a wise decision, but it will have some consequences for the second half of the year. In addition to my regular one week of down time each month, I will also have four weeks of study leave to use between January and the end of June, when I start my vacation in July. So, with six weeks off for my ¾ time schedule and four weeks off for study leave, that means I will be away from the office for 10 weeks in this second half of the year.

You're going to notice my absence. It will mean that meetings where I normally attend will have to happen in my absence. The Caring Committee will have to operate fairly autonomously during those weeks while I'm away. I am always available to come back in a dire emergency, but for the most part, I will not be checking email or answering calls and texts. You will be a lay-led congregation during those weeks. You have done it before and will do it again successfully. I have no doubts in your ability to care for one another.

Some of my study leave time will be spent at home and some of it will involve travel. I have created a private writing retreat for myself in February, I have a study project that I have been imagining but have been unable to make much (any) progress on that I will begin to address in earnest. I have a stack of books that need reading.

During this time, as always, Matt and Kathleen in the office will be able to answer any questions about my availability.



They have a copy of my schedule on file and can tell you when I will next be in the office.

This period might cause some anxiety and what my aunt would call "a mild case of distemper," when I am not available when people want to reach me. I understand that and sympathize. You called me because you want a settled minister. And the reality is that you called a ¾ time minister, and that means for ¼ of the year, there will not be a minister available. I expect that my time will increase when pledging reaches a sustainable level to accommodate that added expense. That was the plan during negotiations and when I agreed to accept your call. We'll get there. But in the meantime, this is our reality.

While I am off duty, I will set my email to respond automatically with information about when I will next be available. If there is a real emergency, the board knows how to reach me. I am looking forward to recharging my body and my brain during my study leave time, and I look forward to returning to you refreshed and ready to engage again in our shared ministry.

Blessings,

Rev. Dawn

Book of Joys & Sorrows

The ritual around shared joys and sorrows during worship varies across UU congregations. Our recently adopted method is to use a book to write out our happy and sad news so that they can be shared from the pulpit.



As you enter the sanctuary, on the table near the coffee area, is a bound journal in which you may write whatever joys and sorrows you wish to have read aloud by the worship leader during the introduction of Joys & Sorrows. After those items have been read, people will then be invited to come forward and silently place stones in either water by the windows or the sand around our chalice as is our custom.

Please avail yourself of this opportunity to connect.

**Rev. Dawn's pastoral phone number is
609.289.5782**

Mark your Calendars!

Shape the Future of Our Congregation and Unitarian Universalism through Planned Legacy Giving

Sunday, February 11, 2018

We are pleased to announce that Rev. Laura Randall, Legacy Campaign Director for the Unitarian Universalist Association, will visit our congregation. She will lead the Sunday morning service and also offer a workshop after the Sunday service on Planned Giving and the "Wake Now Our Vision" Legacy Challenge. Please plan to join us to learn how your future planning can transform UUCSJS and Unitarian Universalism.

– Karen York, Treasurer UUCSJS

February 4 is the Souper Bowl Sunday Soup Sale to benefit Family Promise!

Let us know what kind you'll be making!



Thank you to the Teen CRE Group for their leadership in our annual Guest at Your Table Campaign. The campaign will be running through **January 7** and if you are in need of an envelope, please check with the Teens or Heidi Jannsch. Envelopes are also available in the office.

Please make checks payable to UUCSJS or UUSC.

CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Our Nativity Pageant on December 24 was a huge success; thanks to all those who participated!

As we return to our regularly scheduled RE classes, our teens will be wrapping up the UUSC Guest at Your Table program this month, please see one of them, their teacher, Mariann Maene, or the DRE if you need an envelope to contribute to the initiative. In January the teens will begin *Popcorn Theology Too, the Sequel* with Mariann; this curriculum uses modern film to explore issues of theology and ethics for Unitarian Universalist teens. As Mariann continues to lead the teen class, Paul will continue to explore the Web of Existence with our elementary group and Karen will continue leading the Pre-K - 1st graders with Spiritplay. We were sad to say good-bye to Sade, our childcare provider, who recently began a new job in Maryland, but wish her much success on her new venture!

As always, if you are interested in assisting one Sunday in Children's RE, feel free to contact me at sjsdre@gmail.com

Happy New Year!

Heidi Jannsch

UUCSJS Director of Religious Education

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION FORGET ABOUT THE EXERCISING AND MINDFULNESS.

RESOLVE TO GIVE UUCSJS 5% OF YOUR GROCERY BILL – AND IT'S TOTALLY PAINLESS!

Shop Rite and Acme gift cards are an easy way to give to UUCSJS. Stop by the Social Justice Table any Sunday for gift cards.

When using the gift cards at your local Shoprite or Acme, UUCSJS will receive 5% of the money you spend.



Dear UUCSJS Leader,

October 17, 2017

Every year, each congregation in the Unitarian Universalist Association is asked to give a financial contribution to support the larger faith movement. This contribution supports the Annual Program Fund, which is the single largest source of income for the work of our UUA.

Your congregation gave the full amount requested to the Annual Program Fund during this past fiscal year, allowing our faith to be strengthened all across our Unitarian Universalist Association. **This means you are an honor congregation, honoring the covenant among and between our congregations.** THANK YOU!

I am reaching out to you early in my Presidency to let you know just how important your support for the work of our Association is. As you know, the times in which we live are giving us no shortage of opportunities to show up on the side of love. Your support provides trainings and gatherings of all sorts in your cluster, district, and region. Your support allows us to do both internal and external work on systems of oppression as an Association. Your support of the Annual Program Fund sent me to Charlottesville, VA to witness on behalf of our faith. **Your support strengthens Unitarian Universalism.** No individual congregation can possibly tackle the challenges of our society alone; we need one another, and we are stronger together.

From the UUA Bylaws: "A congregation becomes a member upon acceptance by the Board of Trustees of the Association of its written application for membership in which it subscribes to the principles of and pledges to support the Association." Your fulfillment of the Annual Program Fund request is a promise that has already been made. **Thank you for keeping your promise!**

Please display this Honor certificate somewhere prominent, and share with your congregation my personal appreciation, on behalf of all of the congregations that your generosity supports.

With deep gratitude,
Rev. Susan Frederick Gray
President
Unitarian Universalist Association

NOTE: UUCSJS was also recognized as a Blue Ribbon Congregation, having contributed to the UU United Nations Office (UU-UNO) this past fiscal year.



Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore

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